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September 29, 1954

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
College of Agriculture
The University of Wisconsin
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Josh:

I am delighted to have your letter--on both scores. I am sure that the decision you and Sonneborn came to was a basic one, or in your words, "an essential clarification", that was necessary. So it does indeed to me look like something to give me hope rather than despair. Let me turn, then, to the more immediate question in your letter.

As to a "brief monograph on the specific subject of drug-resistance in bacteria": We have for some time been laying plans for the publication of reasonably brief, specialized books for scientists. It will be obvious to you, therefore, that your question in general falls on fertile ground. There has been so much to do here that our plans for this series are not yet completely worked out. I can only tell you that we hope within another year to eighteen months to have worked them out. We would indeed hope that, when that series is under way, monographs by people such as you would find their proper publishing spot.

Parenthetically, let me say that you will be very wise to be sure, before you and Dr. Cavalli-Sforza expend any great effort, that you have found a publisher very sympathetic toward such a project. Specialized titles, especially in the sciences, have not been finding publishing outlets in the past few years simply because manufacturing costs have skyrocketed, this in turn meaning so much higher prices that the relatively small sales for such items have been further reduced, completing the vicious circle. However, I do believe that three of us interested in the publishing of such books will--one or the other of us--provide you with a publishing outlet for this title. Therefore, I do hope that you will give me a little more time to consider the problem of this specific title further so that I may decide whether or not we can do it; I will give you my assurances that, if we have to decide in the negative, I will approach each of the others in turn, feeling quite certain that one or the other will be delighted to publish it for you. This means, I think, that you and Dr. C.-S. can, at least for the present, go ahead optimistically with your preliminary planning, which should not mean too much expenditure of effort wasted should none of

the three of us eventually be able to handle the book; and I estimate that you should know whether I or one of the other two is willing to commit himself to its publication by the time January 1 comes.

As to our own decision regarding this manuscript, it will depend on our study of a few questions that deal primarily with mechanics. The business of selling to doctors is an involved and expensive one (just to show you how involved, let me tell you it is much easier to sell a \$25.00 book to doctors than it is to get them to buy one at a much lower price). If, after consideration, we decide that there is potentially a good small nucleus of sales to bacteriologists and academic biologists that would give us a reasonably solid base to work on, we might very well decide that the medical sale would be something we could gamble on (a book like Curt Stern's, which should be of value to many, many doctors, could not be sold to them because of their regrettable reluctance to study general and basic principles, and their preference for the purchase of heredity-in-humans in specific doses applied to specific diseases and the like). We may well therefore have to ask you to give us further information a little later on. For the present, will you let me know only what you mean by "a short monograph" -- a book of about how many pages, how many illustrations, how many pages of bibliography? I enclose a postal card for your reply on this one score.

Sincerely yours,

Bill In

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